United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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<u>1. Nam</u>	<u>le</u>			
historic	Oakwood			
and/or common	Leonard, Abiel Hous	se		
2. Loca	ation			
street & number	1 Leonard Avenue			not for publication
city, town	Fayette	vicinity of	congressional district	#4 Hon. Ike Skelton
state	Missouri code	29 county	Howard	code 089
3. Clas	sification			
Category district X building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered	Status occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious creatific transportation other:
	and Mrs. Jasper Mea	115		
street & number	Fayette			Missouri 65248
city, town		vicinity of	state	M1550UFT 05246
5. Loca	ation of Lega	i Description	on	
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc. Reco	order of Deeds		
street & number	Howard County	Courthouse		
city, town	Fayette		state	Missouri 65248
6. Rep	resentation	in Existing	Surveys	
	ouri: A Guide to the -Me" State (WPA Pro		pperty been determined ei	legible?yes _X n
date 1941			federal X_ sta	ite county loca
depository for su	rvey records Published	i: New York: Duell	, Sloan and Pearce	
city, town		_	state	

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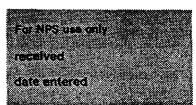
United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

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2. Missouri Historic Sites Catalogue
1963 State
State Historical Society of Missouri
Columbia, Missouri 65201

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Condition xi excellent year year year year	deteriorated ruins unexposed	Check one unaiteredX_ altered	Check one _X_ original site moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

7. Description

Oakwood is a Federal style brick mansion built in 1834-36 with alterations occurring in 1850-51, 1856-58, ca. 1890's, and 1938. It occupies a wooded setting amidst an ensemble of outbuildings on the eastern outskirts of Fayette, Missouri. All of its 29.76 acre setting is being nominated as a suitable rural environment reminiscent of the 500 acre farming operation it once was before various generations began selling parcels off. Significant outbuildings of antebellum origin include a brick slave house, a second brick slave house built in 1857 adjoining an existing brick smokehouse with distinctive lozenge shaped ventilation openings on its three exposed sides, an ice house with a brick lined pit, and a fruit cellar with beehive vaulting. Two barns and a garage are of more recent origin. Oakwood, itself, is a typical Federal period central passage I house with a flemish bond primary facade, a fanlighted central doorway and cut stone lintels over the windows with distinctive keystones. Its rear wing, originally one story, was enlarged to two stories in 1850-51 and provided with a double gallery porch which was in later decades enclosed by stages. The interior of the main block contains 20 foot square rooms on either side of the hallway which, on both stories, contain their original walnut federal woodwork, as does the front room of the ell on the first floor. The two parlor mantels have carved paterae typical of one phase of the Howard County Federal mode. The original hallway was remodeled and enlarged during the 1890's by extending it back into the enclosed ell some 16 feet. Its woodwork is a particularly fine local example of the Victorian classic style. During this same period, bay windows were installed on the ell portion of the north facade, and a sweeping Eastlake verandah placed on the front. In the 1930's both the bay windows and verandah were removed, the verandah being replaced by a small classical portico that must be a near replica of one placed on the house in 1856. For a more in-depth description, consult the following text.

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Oakwood sits admidst an ensemble of outbuildings on a spacious 29.76 acre setting on the eastern outskirts of the town of Fayette in the heart of the Boonslick Country of central Missouri. Oakwood, built between 1834 and 1838, was changed by virtually every generation which has lived in it, and some of these changes themselves have National Register significance. The main block of the house looks west towards the town of Fayette. It is brick, two stories high and is a modified central-hall Georgian house type--the one room deep I house--and presents a five bay principal facade of flemish bond. The house sits low to the ground, its cut stone water table rising no more than a foot above grade. Entrance is granted through double-leaf paneled doors (the upper panels being recent replacements of glass) above which occurs a round arched fanlight with muntins that radiate from a half-sunburst. The reveals are paneled and the keystone above the fanlight is partially obscured by the present porch. Above the window openings are cut stone lintels with keystones of a complex design. The six-over-six panes are large for the period. Shutters of antebellum vintage flank the windows and a standing seam tin roof that terminates flush with the gable ends caps the house. The one-bay portico with tuscan columns now fronting the house is the fourth, but is based on the design of the house's second portico, and was added in 1938 as a replacement for a Eastlake verandah that had spanned the entire front of the house. Cut stone steps fronting this porch were executed in 1856. Replacement bricks covering where the verandah was anchored to the house are clearly visible. On the north side of the main block, two windows of identical design to those of the front elevation occur one above the other on the east side of the chimney stack which is within the fabric and projects inward. At the attic story, two small windows flank the chimney, and identical attic openings constitute the only fenestration on the south elevation of the main block.

A rear ell also of brick is attached to the house, and this has undergone many changes over time. Originally there was a one story ell, three rooms deep, but in 1850-51 this was raised to two stories and provided with a two story gallery porch that contained at least one enclosed room. During the time the house was receiving its Victorian alterations, the gallery was partially enclosed and the main hallway was pushed back into it. A photo taken prior to the 1930's shows the gallery almost completely enclosed except for a lower story section which was left as a small recessed porch. By the 1930's the gallery had been completely bricked-in. On the opposite (north) side of the ell, the first and third sections received projecting three-sided bay windows, the one nearest the front being a full two stories, the other to the rear just one story. In the 1930's, when the house was "unvictorianized," these bays (along with the verandah) were removed and replaced with triple windows. Attached to the rear of the ell, is a one story brick addition, probably built in the 1850's. This addition had a small back porch which was enclosed by the present owners. Also at a later time, after 1890, a small porch was added to the rear south half of

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the main block to span the space between the enclosed ell and outer wall.

The interior of the main block consisted of an eleven and a half foot wide hallway which divided two twenty foot square rooms. During the 1890's, or around the turn-of-the-century, the hallway was extended to a depth of 36 feet, capturing space by enclosing a portion of the rear gallery porch. The rear ell, is some 44'4" deep (inside dimensions) and the load bearing partitions that defined the three original rooms are intact, although the room arrangement of the center room has been altered by the creation of a small alcove and built-in shelving and a mantel of 1930's "Colonial" vintage. Ceilings in the downstairs rooms of the main block are of the high southern type, being about eleven feet high. The plaster cornices in the front parlors were installed by the present owner but, ironically, are a belated fulfillment of Abiel Leonard's intention to have cornices installed in 1856.

On the interior, several features of the earliest or "federal" period of the house are still intact. All mantels in the main block of the house, and one in the first downstairs room of the ell are still present, and some of these are flanked on one or both sides by built-in presses. Two mantels, those of the downstairs front rooms, have Adam style designs carved in the raised panels of their friezes which are bordered by ovolo moldings and supported by pilasters having curious thin column-like half-round moldings. The oval banding of the paterae is a common motif of Howard County federal architecture. The remaining mantels are much simpler in design, and the doors of the built-in presses that occur in both upstairs rooms and in the downstairs forward room of the ell are plain in design. The front door in the hallway is also original except for the replacement panels already mentioned. The inside molding of the doorway architrave repeats the design motif found on the pilasters of the mantel of the north room and there is a carved keystone of interesting design. Door and window architraves downstairs repeat the design just alluded to, and also contain bullseye corner blocks. Some are original and others are careful replications of the originals added during the victorian remodeling. Original doors with panels in the "cross-and-bible" design occur on both floors. Oak floors in the front rooms of the main block, excepting the hallway, are original. Also original in the main block are rafters, joists and other structural materials. All doors, mantels, and trim original to the house are of walnut. From the 1850 enlargement of the rear ell are preserved original pine floors upstairs and also pine doors with paired elongated vertical panels.

The most drastic alteration of the original house came with the complete alteration of the downstairs hallway, including removal of its original staircase and subsequent replacement with a deeper, more lavishly decorated late Victorian hall done in a refined classical design. At this time the doorways to either room of the main block were enlarged to make the rooms en suite. The hall has high paneled wainscotting, an archway halfway down it flanked by

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richly carved fluted Ionic columns and pilasters, and a staircase at the end of the hall that is paneled. The cornice has a delicate dentil course. The remainder of the enclosed porch of the ell on the downstairs has been converted to a modern kitchen and breakfast area by the present owners. Modern bathrooms have also been added upstairs and down in the ell portion and the dimensions of rooms, both upstairs and down, have been altered somewhat at different times, although their basic arrangement is still intact. Beneath the ell section of the house is a full basement which reveals the limestone block walls of the foundation, and in former times two of the basement rooms served as kitchen and cook's quarters respectively. In the attic is the remains of an early water supply system in the form of a lead lined holding tank that serviced a bathroom on the floor below.

The grounds contain several interesting outbuildings. Included are a slave house, a smokehouse with slave quarters attached, a fruit cellar, and an ice house. The larger of the two slave houses is placed some 40 feet northeast of the house and is approximately $15'10" \times 17'$; its date of construction is uncertain. Its board and batten door is in the south gable face opposite the hearth, and the long walls each have a single window. Some 60 feet to the south is the other slave house which was built about 1857 for the slave woman Ann, and, per Abiel Leonard's instructions, was attached to the south side of the smokehouse. Ann's cabin is similar in design to the other, with its door in the gable end opposite the hearth and single window on each of the other walls. Piercing the smokehouse on its three exposed sides is grillwork executed in lozenge designs of varying sizes, provided, of course, for ventilation. The fruit cellar is located about 100 feet south of the house. The small brick structure housing its entrance is of contemporary devising, but the brick lined cellar itself with its unique beehive vaulting is original. Some 425 feet east of the house, near the creek that was its source of supply, is the ice house. The date of its construction is uncertain, but it has been there at least since the 1850's; its present housing is of more recent origin. It consists of circular brick-lined pit some 12 or 14 feet across and at least as deep.

Two barns located 125 feet east of the house are of a later period than the outbuildings just discussed, and a garage 50 feet south of the house is of recent origin.

The house sits on high ground amidst the large trees that inspired its name with a commanding view of Fayette and the surrounding countryside. Its present 29.76 acre setting preserves for it on a smaller scale its rural aspect; it once was surrounded by much larger acreage and was the center of an active farming operation. Cutting an arc along the southeast edge of the property are railroad tracks, and beyond that a water treatment lagoon; the streets and residences of Fayette surround it on the remaining sides. A stream crosses the

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eastern edge of the property, and another more intermittent one cuts a north-south course across the western third of the property. Beyond that are the rear lots of a somewhat blighted neighborhood that has been the target for proposed urban renewal projects which might impact Oakwood's historic setting.

The present owners have maintained the house, outbuildings and grounds in excellent condition, and have endeavored to preserve the rural qualities the property still retains as well as its historic setting.

8. Significance

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Oakwood, the Abiel Leonard House, is significant according to the criteria of eligibility under definitions B, C and D to wit: it is associated with the life of Abiel Leonard a person significant to Missouri's past; it embodies distinctive characteristics of federal style architecture in Missouri and has significant alterations that are over 50 years old; its construction is documented manuscript materials which yield significant information concerning antebellum building in Missouri. Oakwood's areas of significance are as follows: LAW: Abiel Leonard was one of the most successful and distinguished lawyers of his time, 1819-1863, and his career culminated in his appointment to the state Supreme Court in 1855: POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT: Leonard was a leader of the Whig Party in Missouri prior to the Civil War and served a term in the state legislature, was nominated to unsuccessfully oppose Thomas Hart Benton for the Senate in 1834, chaired the state committee at the Whig Convention in 1839, and was generally active in Whig affairs throughout his career, favoring the American System, supporting the institution but not extension of slavery, and supporting the maintenance of the union against nullification; ARCHITECTURE: Oakwood exemplifies aspirations toward elegance and gentility in central Missouri over three generations, is one of the earliest surviving brick I houses in mid-Missouri, has federal stylistic features that place it in one of Howard County's major federal phases and make it an important example of the federal style in the western United States, has a Victorian classic hallway added in the 1890's that is a fine local example of this mode and other alterations dating from 1850-51, 1856-58, ca. 1890's, ca. 1938 which exemplify the efforts of the Leonard family to "update" their house to keep it abreast with changing standards of taste and pretention; SOCIAL: the Abiel Leonard manuscript materials are the largest private collection for the pre-Civil War period in Missouri and contain extensive information on politics, law, land speculation, economics and social life including a wealth of data on building activities set in the context of daily living that make the construction and remodeling of Oakwood the best documented view of the antebellum building process that has yet come to light, thus enhancing Oakwood's value as an artifact; AGRICULTURE: Oakwood was the center of a farming operation based on slave labor and has one of the finest ensembles of antebellum outbuildings to be found in Missouri.

The following text provides a more complete explanation of these areas of significance.

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Abiel Leonard's life (1797-1863) was a fascinating one that both reflected and shaped the character of the time in which he lived. He came impoverished to the Boonslick Country of central Missouri at a very early date, 1819, when it was only beginning to open up following the conclusion of the War of 1812, and his career prospered and developed along with the region. The manuscript materials he left behind constitute the largest single collection of private manuscripts for the pre-Civil War Missouri period. Included are hundreds of letters on topics ranging from domestic to political and business affairs, detailed financial data, extensive material concerning his legal practice, his land transactions, and other such matters. In the Abiel Leonard Papers and the Abiel Leonard Collection is a vivid portrait of antebellum Missouri life, and also a considerable body of information on the various building activities undertaken by Leonard during his residency in Missouri, including the building and remodeling of Oakwood.

Abiel Leonard was born in Windsor, Vermont and was a product of a long New England line going back early days of the Massachusetts Bay Colony where his first American ansestors had been imported to help launch the iron works at Saugus, Mass. At least two of his ansestors were Puritan ministers, and one of them, his grandfather, the Rev. Abiel Leonard, had been a chaplin in General Washington's army before committing suicide. His namesake, the subject of our inquiry, had managed a couple of years study at Dartmouth, and had read law in New York, before misfortune struck the family again. His father, Nathaniel Leonard, was in 1815, commander of Fort Niagara and was absent from his post the night British forces took the fort by surprise. This disgrace was followed by more misfortune as the family farm near Lewistown, New York fell heavily into debt. One by one the Leonard children headed West to places where the past would not haunt them and where fresh opportunities existed. For Abiel Leonard, this meant seeking out the westernmost outpost of American civilization--the Boonslick boomtown of Franklin, Missouri to which caravans of immigrants from the Upper South were heading to secure titles and take up land in the latest eldorado. His beginnings there were impoverished, but an event occurred which firmly established his place in that community of transplanted Kentuckyians and Virginians. In 1824, he fought a duel with Taylor Berry who had tested his mettle by publicly humiliating him. With firm resolve. Leonard, who was a small, frail and chronically ill man, killed Berry, and perhaps also killed the ghost of humiliation that must have dogged him.

His rapid rise in the legal profession following the duel could not have occurred, however, had not Leonard possessed exceptional abilities. A contemporary of Leonard's characterized his abilities as a lawyer in this way:

Judge Leonard was not an orator. He had few of the graces of elocution. There was nothing remarkably pleasing in his gesture, and his voice was harsh and coarse. When he started off in an argument he would pitch his voice to a particular tone, and there

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keep it to the close. His great power as a lawyer was in his masterly logic. His mind was peculiarly and essentially logical, rejecting all merely plausible reasons as he would the false. Not only was he essentially logical, but truthful—and as exact in his moral as in his intellectual logic.

While listening to him you lost sight of the man and his imperfection as a mere orator, and your attention was rivited by the profoundness of his arrgument and the depth of his reasoning. He laid down his premises with great fairness, and gradually led the minds of his audience to the adoption of his conclusions.

For his services, Leonard always demanded the highest fees, but this did not discourage clients in need of the best legal advice available from seeking him out, and he carried on his practice at a state level being often absent from home. His reputation beecame so firmly established as the years passed that by 1855, his colleagues in an unusual gesture transcended the volatile partisan divisions of those turbulent pre-Civil War times to almost unanimously urge his appointment to the Supreme Court of Missouri. This was accomplished without Leonard's exertion of any effort in his behalf. He only served one term on the bench, but during that time enhanced his reputation for great legal learning and exhaustive research in the opinions he wrote.

Abiel Leonard was also very active in the political sphere as a devout Whig. His political activities have been of interest to scholars not only due to the role he played in pre-Civil War politics but also because his correspondence with political intimates over the state provides an important "insiders" view of the manuverings of the time. The role he played was not that of a perennial candidate, for he appeared to have an aversion to seeking or holding public office; rather, his stature in politics as in law seemed more based on his keeness of perception, strong sense of purpose and unshakable moral integrity. He was elected by a large majority to the state legislature in 1834, and this along with his supreme court term, were the only public offices he ever held. His most significant contribution during his legislative term was to assist in the revision of state laws, a task he performed with distinction. Beyond that term, he never sought public office, nor did he arduously canvass voters in behalf of other Whig candidates. In 1838, members of his party nominated him to oppose Thomas Hart Benton, then seeking his fourth Senate term, but this was done without Leonard's permission and, despite his good showing in the vote, caused him much displeasure. During the 1840's he joined with a group of younger politicians to organize a more viable Whiq movement in Missouri and at the party's convention in 1839, he was elected chairman of the state Efforts by friends to obtain for him a cabinet post in Zachary committee. Taylor's administration failed, and two years later, in 1850, he declined to

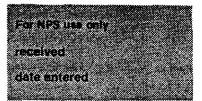
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become a candidate against Benton in the election that finally ended "Bullion Ben's" political career. Five years later he was again mentioned as a possible candidate for a Senate seat, but his appointment to the Supreme Court ended such speculation. As a political leader, he favored the American System of internal improvements to promote the development of commerce and industry, and served the interests of the landed proprietor class, even to the extent, despite his New England origins, of favoring slavery. But he never had any truck with nullification, and as the War approached took a staunchly Unionist stand. This position brought him closer to that of Benton, and alienated him from the southern wing of his own party, so that after the election of Benton's successor, Whig Henry Geyer, who aligned with Southern Democrats, Leonard's role in politics decreased.

Another sphere of activity which is essential to the understanding of Leonard's life was his extensive involvement in land speculation. A very basic aspect of his character, perhaps forged by his father's financial misfortune, was an unquenchable thirst for great wealth, and he concluded early on that land speculation was the avenue to that wealth. "If we had \$50,000 I think in ten years we would have \$400,000....I think in the next five years we would make all we want, and live at ease like gentlemen afterwards.' This he wrote to his younger brother Nathaniel in 1836. A decade earlier he had established Nathaniel on "Ravenswood" farm in adjoining Cooper County and they had been partners in land buying since that time, but Leonard also speculated heavily own his own and with others, including his son-in-law, Horace Everett who was purchasing warrants for him in Iowa in the 1850's. By the 1850's, Leonard was instructing land agents in western Missouri to purchase titles without limit, so that by the time of the Civil War he owned some 60.000 acres in Missouri and Iowa, bought mainly on credit. He generally paid a dollar or less per acre and intended to sell at around ten dollars, but he made two miscalculations. He did not forsee the Panic of 1857 which caught him vastly overextended with interest and taxes to pay on land for which there were no buyers, and this occurred during a time when he was straped for cash, having taken a considerable reduction in income to accept his Supreme Court appointment. The strain of his exertions to recoup his solvency by rebuilding his legal practice following his court term led to a breakdown from which he would not recover and the last years of his life were sad ones for him and his wife, Jeanette. He died in 1863 during the gloomy and unhappy years of the Civil War. In the end he became the victim of that very drive that had carried him through a duel and on to a successful and distinguished career, but which finally propelled him into a financial mire as deep as any which entrapped his father. It was not till long after the Civil War that his estate was finally settled.

Abiel Leonard's building activities, especially as regards the building and enlargement of Oakwood, to a significant degree mirror his powerful ambitions. And the understanding of the fabric of Oakwood and its dependencies is immeasurably enhanced by the Leonard manuscript materials which shed light upon

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the practical aspects of his building projects, including his dealings with various craftsmen and suppliers, itemized accounts for materials and labor and family correspondence relating to building. But in this material is also an insight into the motivations behing some of Leonard's projects, into his desire to achieve the highest level of elegance his "Upper Country" craftsmen and suppliers could provide for him. These manuscripts provide a portrait of antebellum building in Missouri which is literally unique and impart to Oakwood an additional level of significance.

Abiel Leonard appears to have spent his first decade in the Boonslick country boarding in Franklin or Boonville, and his memo books record payments to a succession of landladys. In 1829, he paid \$22 to have a house hauled from the soon to be abandoned town of Franklin, which was being ravaged by the flood waters of the Missouri River, to "New" Franklin which was perched safely in the river hills nearby. This house he quickly sold, and in 1830 he began laying plans to build a house of brick in the new town, probably in anticipation of his marriage to Jeanette Reeves in October of that year. Jeanette was the daughter of Benjamin Reeves who had achieved distinction in a number of elective and appointive offices in Kentucky and Missouri, including a term as Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky and appointment as Commissioner to survey and mark the Santa Fe Trail. The house for the newly married couple must have been a modest one, for the cost of the house and cellar plus the lots, improvements on lots, and a stable came to \$1,546.83.

By 1833, Abiel and Jeanette had moved to Fayette where the county seat had been transferred when it became evident that Franklin was doomed. Legend reports that in the first year or two, they resided in a log house on the property where their beloved home, Oakwood, the subject of this nomination, was to be built. Unfortunately, crucial expense books are missing for the years of Oakwood's cnstruction, 1835-36, and the usual steady stream of letters between the frequently absent Abiel and his wife are also not encountered for these years, suggesting that Leonard probably spent a great deal of time at home personally supervising the construction of his house. It is ironic that the few items of data that do survive still constitute the largest single source of information concerning early building in the Boonslick Country, a fact that gains particular importance because this period and this region saw the finest flowering of the Federal Style in the Western United States, and Oakwood, itself, is an important milestone in the emergence of central Missouri's society, economy and architecture from frontier conditions towards a level of taste, gentility and prosperity, as shall shortly be seen.

A recent article on carpentry in 18th century Virginia and Maryland observed that while in some situations, a master builder would be responsible for all labor and materials, in others the carpenter (or other craftsman) would be hired for his skilled labor alone while the client was responsible for coordinating the building effort and providing materials. A century later and

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must further west along the migrational route of southern culture this latter situation still prevailed, as is revealed in the Leonard manuscript materials. One legend reports that Leonard was so particular about the quality of the brick that some batches had to be fired as many as three times. There are items which reveal that Leonard did not have an easy time procuring either material or labor. An order for Oak flooring and walnut lumber had to be deferred for several months as his supplier had to first "build three or four flatboats." He had tried to make arrangements to have a Mr. Smith make shingles for him but was informed that Smith was too busy but that the "young man" could make 5,000 the first work he did. His father-in-law informed him in 1835 that "...Your work is progressing so far as I can judge, quite well. Mr. Harvey is tendering his aid. Mr. Collier still believes there is brick enough to finish--of course none is halling (sic.) from Hughes? Shepperd could not be prevailed upon to work." The house was probably completed by the end of 1836. although payments to brick masons continued to be made throughout 1837, and for that year totaled \$834.57.

In building Oakwood, Leonard must have been striving for the highest level of architectural pretention achievable in the Boonslick at a time when trading networks with cosmopolitan centers such as St. Louis or Philadelphia were still in a primitive state and needed manufactured items were difficult to obtain. To achieve the level of emerging affluence that Oakwood represented, Leonard was compelled to search beyond the limited resources of his immediate environment. "I am building a house and want some materials which cannot conveniently be had short of your city," wrote Leonard in 1835 to St. Louis merchants P. & J. Powell. Items needed included "Boston" nails in various sizes and large quantities, 180 panes of 12" x 18" window glass, a variety of hardware for doors and windows, including "Newell" hinges to attach window blinds and it would seem only made by a St. Louis blacksmith named Newell. There is also a rough draft of a letter he wrote in that same year to an unidentified person, very likely in St. Louis, requesting a variety of furnishings including Scotch carpeting, in "deep, strong colors," best quality wall paper with velvet paper bordering for two rooms and a hall, material for curtains including worked fringe and brass rods, a mahogany sofa, 1 dozen mahogany chairs, one dozen windsor chairs, one high post mahogany bedstead, a pair of brass andirons, shovel and tongs, and a brass fire fender. The furniture and fireplace equipment he rekoned would cost about \$290. On April 5, 1857, he paid Peter Powell & Co. of St. Louis \$182.11 for the hinges and fastenings and other materials he had ordered. He did not entirely ignore local resources. Between May 1837 and February 1838, he paid Fayette cabinet maker Samuel C. Major \$124 for locally made furniture.

It has already been mentioned that Oakwood is an important indicator of the development of domestic arrchitecture in central Missouri. Its I house form has been described by Kniffen, Glassie and others as a type characteristic of the Upper South, and symbolic of Middle Class achievement. I houses were

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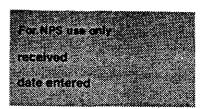
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undoubtedly being built in limited numbers in the Boonslick country in the 1820's, although log cabins and hall-and-parlor cottages were much more numerous. The Nicholas S. Burchardt House (HABS: MO-243), now destroyed, built between Fayette and New Franklin around 1830 probably represents one of the earliest pretentious brick central passage I houses to appear in the region. Oakwood coming just a few years later is now one of the oldest surviving I houses in mid-Missouri. It has many of the typical features of the Federal style that developed in Howard County in the late 1820's and persisted through the early years of the 1840's before yielding to the Greek Revival. Notable among these features on the exterior are the front facade flemish bond brickwork and the fanlighted entrance door, while on the inside the "Christian" doors, mantels, flanking presses, and bulls-eye architraves, all executed in walnut, are typical "Howard County Federal." The unusual carved Adamesque paterae on the parlor mantels are similar in design to those encountered elsewhere in mantels of houses erected in and around Fayette during the 1830's, and taken as a group, these mantels constitute one of the two or three major phases of the Federal style in Howard County. This writer has encountered no evidence that Adam style woodwork of equal or superior quality occurs further west in the United States than Howard County, suggesting in many ways that the Federal style "died" in mid-Missouri. As for the cut stone lintels and keystones, Charles van Ravenswaay has observed that they impart a touch of elegance to Oakwood, and other area houses, that indicates the level of architectural refinement that local builders were capable of producing by that time.

By 1850, Leonard was ready to undertake the first of several major renovations of Oakwood. In that year he was 53, his wife 38, and living in their household were six children (a seventh would arrive in the following year), a relative and two wards as well as nine slaves. It is therefore no surprise that Abiel and Jeanette would contemplate an enlargement of their house. This was accomplished by adding another story to the existing rear ell and adding a double gallery supported by square boxed pillars with an outside stair and an enclosed porch room. Such galleried rear wings were beginning to become a common feature of large houses of both I and double-pile variety being erected in Missouri's plantation regions during the prosperous decade of the 1850's. For this particular project, there exist lumber bills, itemized accounts of labor and materials, and references to the progress of building in correspondence between Abiel and Jeanette. He appeared to obtain most of his native lumber for joists, rafters and the like from a Glasgow sawyer and tobacco manufacturer named J. F. Nicholds while the bulk of his pine finishing lumber, as well as 15,000 shingles, came from a Boonville lumber dealer named R. D. Perry. The pine lumber cost between 2.75 and 3.75 a foot while the native lumber ran between 1.25 and 1.50 a foot. The use of pine as well as its comparative expense is a good indication of one way in which the "Upper Country" was becoming more cosmopolitan, because pine had to be imported from

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outside the region. Some undoubtedly came from the Yellow Pine stands of the Gasconade River valley of Missouri, but other species, such as White Pine, had to be shipped from the East. Pine comes to predominate over the native walnuts and cherries as an interior finishing wood beginning in the 1850's.

A major difficulty in completing the work on the rear wing was obtaining sufficient brick. Some 30,000 brick were acquired from James Patterson, but once he refused to provide more, a search of the countryside was necessary to locate someone who had set up a kiln and was ready to burn brick. Brick from a Mr. Gates proved of such indifferent quality that the mason advised that no more be hauled from there. Good brick, he said was available from Boonville, but this necessitated a river crossing and the added expense of ferriage.

Leonard's main carpenter for the rear wing was William H. Nipper who was 33 and had come from Blount Co., Tenn. A biography in the 1883 county history credits him with being one of the few good carpenters around. After 1858, he retired to a 270 acre farm and took up agriculture. His principal mason was William H. Jones, 34, from Maryland.

In 1852, the genesis of another building project appeared in a letter from Abiel to his wife: "I took supper today at Mr. Prewitts and was so well pleased with his iron portico, just put up, that I am quite in the mind of having one to our house. It is both handsome and durable, but I presume a little more costly than a wooden one. (Ours)...would be a very great improvement to our house." It would be four years before work on this portico would begin, and it would be the centerpiece of another round of renovations which would include new plastering and papering, bridging of the floors to stop their shaking, making blinds for the windows, building new doors for the carriage house and a new servant's house for slave Ann to be attached to the existing smokehouse.

The portico that was erected in 1856 gave way to a Victorian verandah, which was in turn replaced by a portico built in the 1930's as a conscious replication of the 1856 one, so that the front elevation of Oakwood now approximates its 1850's appearance.

Although the 1856 portico has no material relevance to the present fabric of Oakwood it is still crucial to understanding the social history of the house owing to the documentation of its construction which can be found in the Leonard manuscripts. At the time is was being built, Leonard was in St. Louis attending a session of the Supreme Court, but remained in constant written communication with his wife and children. This author has transcribed some sixty family letters for the two month period from late March through May of 1856 when the renovations were taking place. Not only is there a day by day account of the progress of building, but also of every other domestic event.

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Planting the garden and farm crops, were described in detail as were the activities of the children including their dancing lessons and what they were reading and doing. Concern over the character of the oldest son, Reeves, was exchanged, and there was discussion concerning the preparation of clothing and letters of introduction which Reeves would need for his impending departure for Dartmouth. These letters present the most intimate and concentrated view of a building project set in the broader context of daily living that can be found for the antebellum period in Missouri. Space is too restricted to permit a detailed summary of this correspondence, but aspects that are relevant to the understanding of Oakwood should be mentioned.

Apart from the bridging of the floors and constrution of Ann's house, the 1856-1858 building activities were directed at making Oakwood appear more "up to date" and fashionable. Coinciding as they did with Leonard's Supreme Court appointment, the renovations were clearly directed at bringing Oakwood more in line with its owner's enhanced status. On May 1, 1856 Leonard wrote to Jeanette: "I called at Mr. Michael-the paper man-today. He told me it was common here to paper ceilings, and put on paper mouldings and center pieces and showed me paper for that purpose. I thought...that it would make a very handsome finish, far handsomer than anything we have yet in the upper country. He said it was used here [St. Louis] in fine parlors." In one instance, his desire for fashionableness was thwarted by the conservation of a local craftsman. He had evidently wanted to fit a heavy Greek Revival cornice on his house but was discouraged from by doing so by his carpenter, Samuel Stoner, who felt that "without it [the cornice] is carried up pretty heavy it will look poor where it crops the chimney and if it is heavy it will come over the windows." Stoner, 34, was from Pennsylvania, and had been involved in the building of two other Howard County houses now on the National Register: the Horace Kingsbury house and the Prior Jackson homeplace.

The construction of the portico also provides a vivid picture of the complications and emotional strain that could often accompany a pre-Civil War building project. Leonard had apparently hoped to circumvent the limitations of local resources by acquiring the pine lumber needed for the portico in St. Louis and shipping it by packet to Glasgow where one of his slaves could be dispatched to haul it to Fayette. But a series of mishaps resulted in a delay of the shipment and considerable anxiety for Jeanette. She informed her husband that the carpenters had come and were running out of things to do for want of lumber. Finally their carpenter was compelled to purchase the needed plank in Boonville and ferry it across the river, only to discover that the delayed plank from St. Louis had finally arrived. Other frustrations were encountered in making the stone foundation and steps for the portico, a time consuming process that had to be done by hand. The stonemason, who had only recently arrived from Germany, Anton Lutz, provided only his labor and depended on Leonard's slaves to procure the stone with which he was to work. This

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proved particularly trying because frequent early spring rains had delayed planting the garden and corn crop and Lutz required slaves John or Jim to haul rock at the same time they were desperately needed to break ground. Finally Leonard wrote his wife: "I did not intend that the steps should interfere with farming and hope will not allow it to prevent or at all stand in the way of that business. I supposed that after the foundation was laid for the porch, Mr. Lutz would wait for help as to the steps until we could furnish it. At any rate you can say to him, Jim cannot help him, nor can John, until our corn is planted..."

Lutz continued to work methodically away at the steps and they were the last project to be completed in that spring building season. It is testimony to the quality of the finished article, however, that these steps are still in place serving their original function. Other projects on the agenda did not get completed in that year. The necessity of getting crops in caused the building of Ann's house to be deferred until the following year. The painting and papering had to be put off for two years. Jeanette had pressed Leonard to make a decision about who to get to do the painting. She informed him that Mr. Fitzpatrick, who had done Doctor Talbot's house (another pretentious mansion near Fayette) would be available in about a month and that he could get a man to put a cornice around the ceilings. Leonard seemed reluctant to pursue this course and tried without success to secure a painter from St. Louis. In the end, he conceeded that, "I believe we shall be obliged to take on up-country painters..." It was not until two years later that "two young men from Virginia," nephews of a local merchant, were hired to accomplish the painting. This, and the building of a bookcase in the library, were the last building projects undertaken during Leonard's lifetime.

After Leonard's death in 1863, his widow Jeanette continued to live at Oakwood for another three decades until her own passing in 1895. Living with her for part of this time were her son Reeves (who died in 1878 at age 39) and her daughter-in-law Alice Gardenhire who, following Reeves' demise, married the youngest Leonard son, Nathaniel William ("Willie") Leonard. It was likely after Jeanette's death that Alice launched a program of renovation that included the Eastlake verandah that swept across the entire front and the bay windows added on the north side of the house. She may have also been responsible for the transformation of the central hallway, which while not in keeping with the original Federal character of the house, is still of considerable interest because of the quality of its workmanship and materials. and as yet another example of the "up-grading" of Oakwood to keep in step with changing standards of elegance and refinement. The stairhall is an excellent example of the "free classic" (or "Edwardian") interlude of the Victorian period, just as the verandah illustrates the Eastlake Gothic phase. The process of each generation repudiating the taste of the preceeding one was not over yet, and the surfaces of Oakwood continued to be a skirmish area in the on-

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going "battle of styles." In complete keeping with the neo-Traditionalism of the 1920's and 30's, of the Georgian and "Dutch" Colonials, the daughter of Alice and Reeves, Jeanette Spencer and her husband Perry banished the bays and verandah and replaced Victorian architectural licentiousness with Classical restraint in the form of a small portico that is probably a nearly exact replica of the one Abiel and Jeanette had built some eighty-two years earlier. The Spencers did bring to culmination the process of enclosing the rear gallery that had begun a generation earlier and added multiple windows on both the north and south sides of the wing to achieve the sunporch quality then in vogue.

Oakwood finally passed from the Leonard family some two decades ago, and since 1971 has been the home of the present owners. Their tenure has been a benevolent one for Oakwood. They have created a modern kitchen facility and breakfast room in the lower portion of the enclosed rear wing and added improved bathroom facilities and a small greenhouse, but have done nothing to change the historical character of the house, and indeed have endeavored to carefully preserve that quality. The descendants of Abiel and Jeanette Leonard can be assured that for at least another generation, Oakwood will continue to exemplify the refined life-style that was once so commonly associated with the Boonslick Country.

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1. Bay, W. V. N. Reminiscences of the Bench and Bar of Missouri. St. Louis: F.H. Thomas and Company, 1878, pp. 356-370.

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Department of	Natural Reso	urces	1 10 1000
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Director, Department		esources and	
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For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this prop	erty is included in	the National Registe	r
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Keeper of the National Register			
Attest:			date
Chief of Registration			vario .

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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OAKWOOD

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Item number

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- 14. Missouri Seventh Census, 1850, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule.
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- 16. Van Ravenswaay, Charles. "Architecture in the Boon's Lick Country," Missouri Historical Bulletin, VI (July 1950).

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OA KW OOD

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Page 1

7.80 acres, being Southeast part of the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter and the Northeast part of the Southeast Quarter in Section 11. Township 50, Range 16, and 21.96 acres, the Southwest part of the Southwest Quarter of Northwest Quarter, and the Northwest part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 12, Township 50, Range 16, and being in all 29.76 acres, more or less, described by survey as follows: Beginning at a spike in the old Fayette to Harrisburg County Road, said point being 1.17 chains South of an established stone, the Quarter section corner on West side said Section 12, Township 50, Range 16, thence North 65 degrees West 4.43 chains, thence north 31-1/2 degrees West 9.27 chains to established stone in center East Morrison Street, thence with same North 58-1/2 degrees East 13.23 chains to center Leonard Avenue, thence North 8 degrees West 3.84 chains to spike, thence South 89 degrees East 11.10 chains to center M.K. & T. Railroad, thence with center of same (1) South 2 degrees East 3.95 chains, (2) South 4 degrees West 3.00 chains, (3) South 9 degrees West 3.00 chains, (4) South 14 degrees West 3.00 chains, (5) South 19 degrees West 3.00 chains (6) South 24 degrees West 3.00 chains, (7) South 29 degrees West 3.00 chains, (8) South 34 degrees West 0.75 chains to spike where the Fayette to Harrisburg County Road crosses same. thence with said road (1) West 5.05 chains, (2) North 65 degrees West 2.57 chains to point of beginning.

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United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

OAKWOOD

Item number

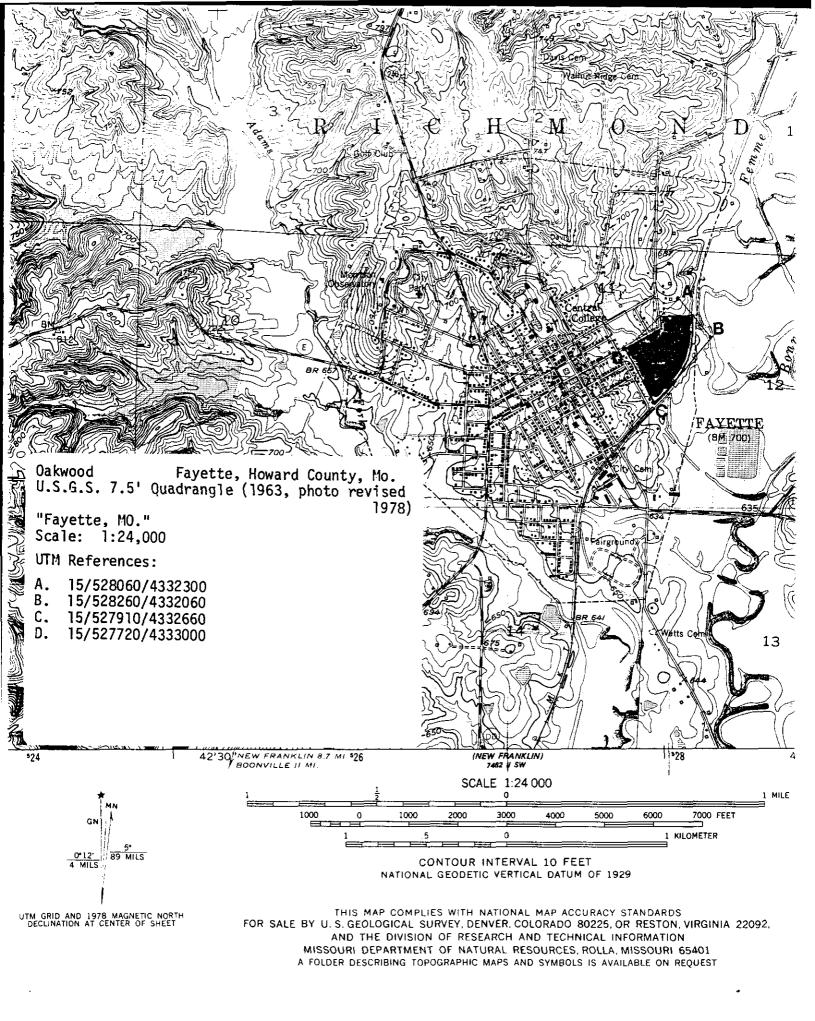
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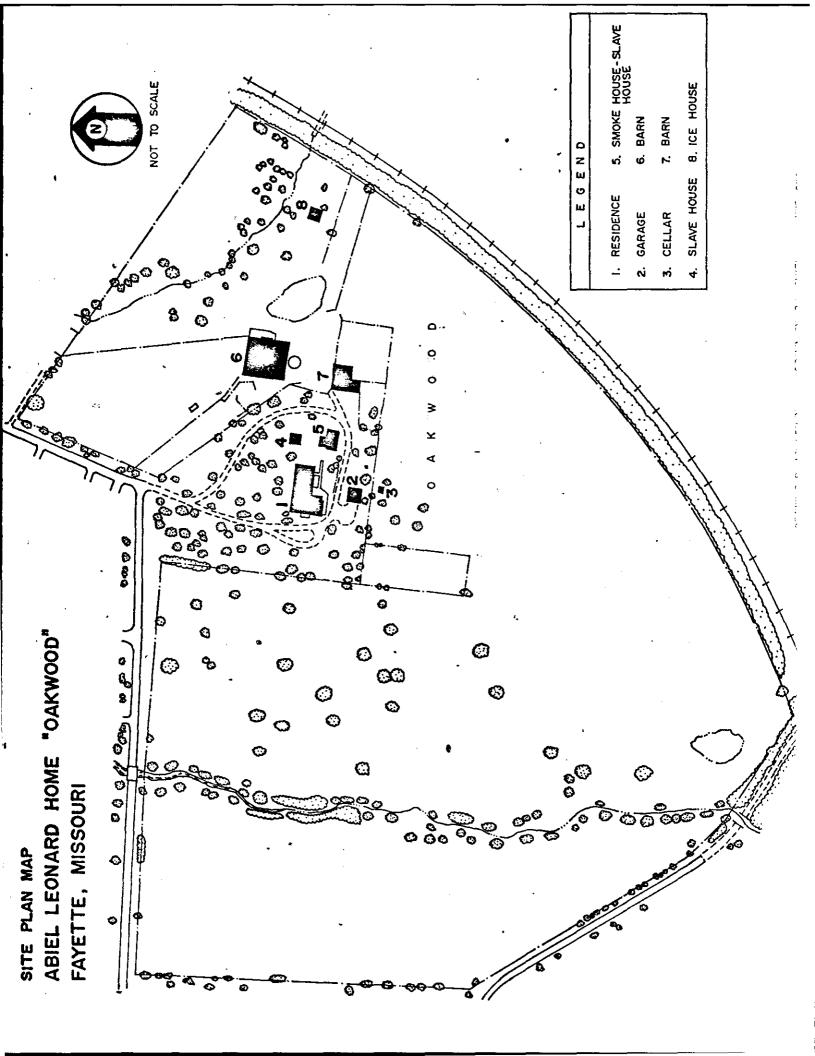
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7.80 acres, being Southeast part of the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter and the Northeast part of the Southeast Quarter in Section 11, Township 50, Range 16, and 21.96 acres, the Southwest part of the Southwest Quarter of Northwest Quarter, and the Northwest part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 12, Township 50, Range 16, and being in all 29.76 acres, more or less, described by survey as follows: Beginning at a spike in the old Fayette to Harrisburg County Road, said point being 1.17 chains South of an established stone, the Quarter section corner on West side said Section 12. Township 50, Range 16, thence North 65 degrees West 4.43 chains, thence north 31-1/2 degrees West 9.27 chains to established stone in center East Morrison Street, thence with same North 58-1/2 degrees East 13.23 chains to center Leonard Avenue, thence North 8 degrees West 3.84 chains to spike. thence South 89 degrees East 11.10 chains to center M.K. & T. Railroad, thence with center of same (1) South 2 degrees East 3.95 chains, (2) South 4 degrees West 3.00 chains, (3) South 9 degrees West 3.00 chains, (4) South 14 degrees West 3.00 chains, (5) South 19 degrees West 3.00 chains (6) South 24 degrees West 3.00 chains, (7) South 29 degrees West 3.00 chains, (8) South 34 degrees West 0.75 chains to spike where the Fayette to Harrisburg County Road crosses same. thence with said road (1) West 5.05 chains, (2) North 65 degrees West 2.57 chains to point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION: The 29.76 acre tract being nominated represents all that is left of the original Oakwood estate of some 500 acres. There are two justifications for the boundary: a). it provides a suitable rural setting for Oakwood and its outbuildings and b). protects Oakwood and its outbuildings from possible encrouchment by adverse development. To the southeast a water treatment plant has recently been constructed, while the neighborhood along the southwest edge of the property has been the target of Community Development Block Grant applications calling for the replacement of blighted housing with a park that might adversely affect Oakwood, or even claim Oakwood property. The boundary as presented will hopefully provide a measure of protection from these and other development pressures.





OAKWOOD

COUNTY: Howard

LOCATION: Fayette

OWNER:
ADDRESS: Mr. & Mrs. Jasper Meals 1 Leonard Avenue, Fayette, MO 65248

DATE APPROVED BY A.C.: June 25-26, 1982

DATE SENT TO D.C.: August 20, 1982
DATE OF REC. IN D.C.: August 24, 1982

DATE PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER: September 23, 1982

DATE CERTIFICATE AWARDED Apri
(AND PRESENTOR): Mail

April 20, 1983 Mailed from Central Office

DATE FILE REVIEWED:

OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo
Photographer: James M. Denny
Date: December 1980
Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65101

View of Oakwood from western edge of property



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo
Photographer: James M. Denny
Date: December 1980
Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, primary (west) facade; 100king northeast.

N



1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101 #3 of 26 OAKWOOD

Oakwood, rear of house showing enclosed gallery of ell; looking northwest.



OAKWOOD

#4 of 26

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

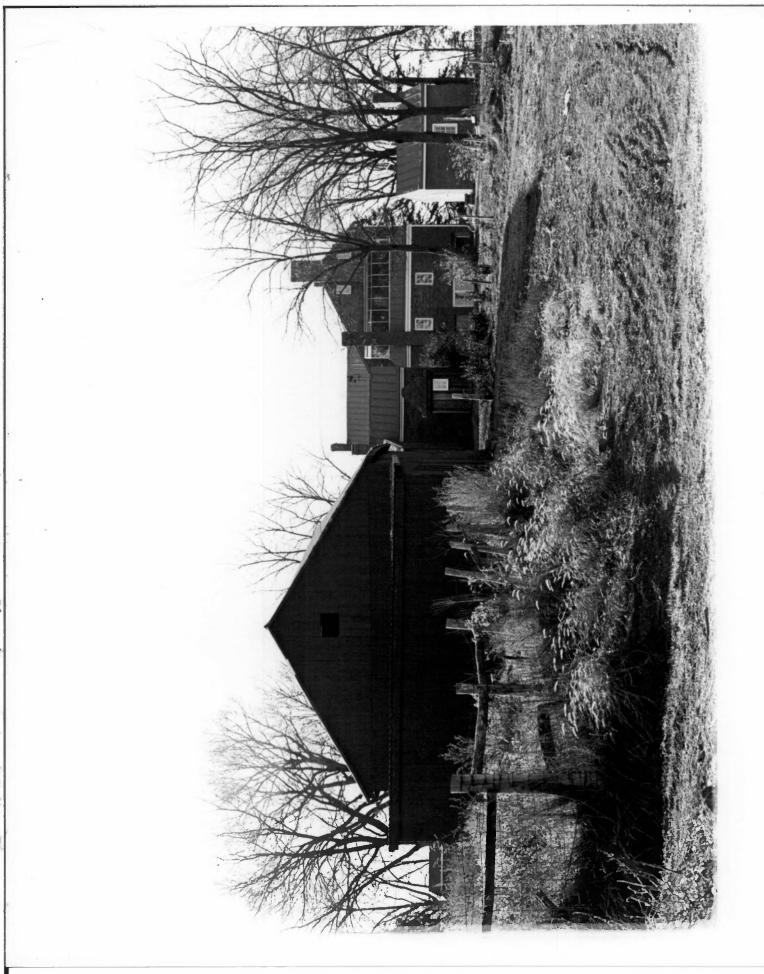
Oakwood, north elevation; looking south, slightly east.



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo
Photographer: James M. Denny
Date: December 1980
Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood and outbuildings; looking west.



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980

Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

#6 of 26

Oakwood, detail of primary facade window; looking east.



#7 of 26 OAKWOOD

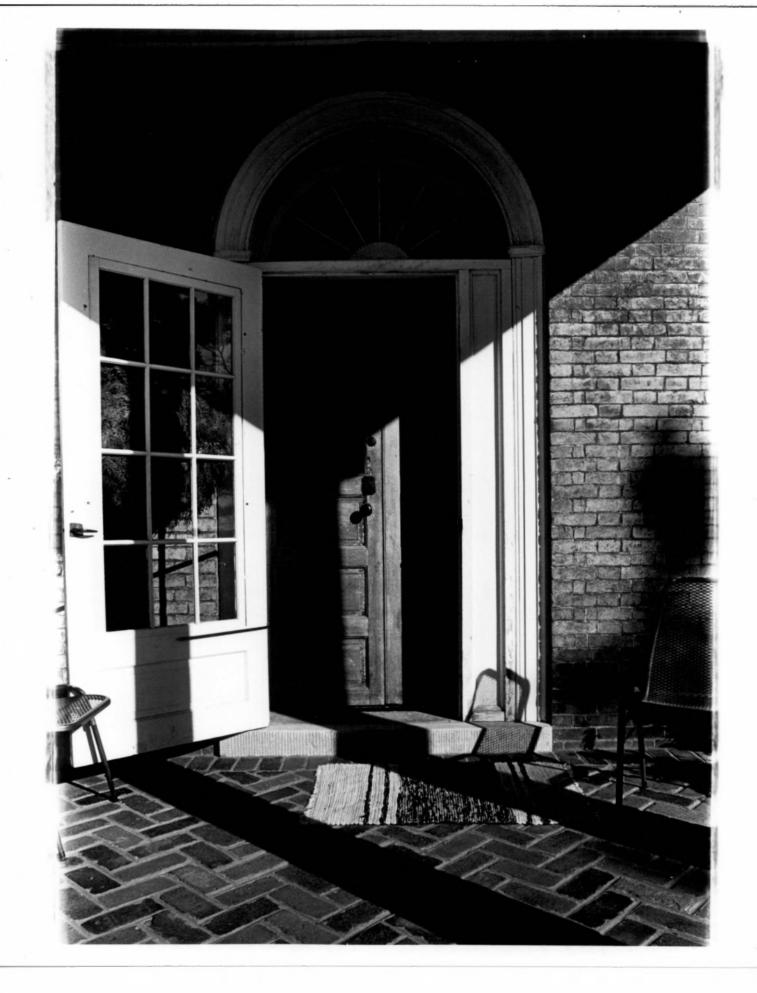
1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny

Date: December 1980 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources

P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, detail of entrance door; looking east.



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny
Date: December 1980
Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Slave cabin at Oakwood; looking northwest.



1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: January 1981 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101 #9 of 26 OAKWOOD

Interior of slave cabin at Oakwood; looking north.



OAKWOOD

#10 of 26

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny

Date: December 1980

Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, MO 65101

Smokehouse at Oakwood; looking south.



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980

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Jefferson City, MO 65101

Slave cabin attached to rear of smokehouse; looking east.



#12 of 26

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

Larger of two post-bellum barns at Oakwood; looking northwest.



#13 of 26

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

Icehouse at Oakwood; looking northeast.

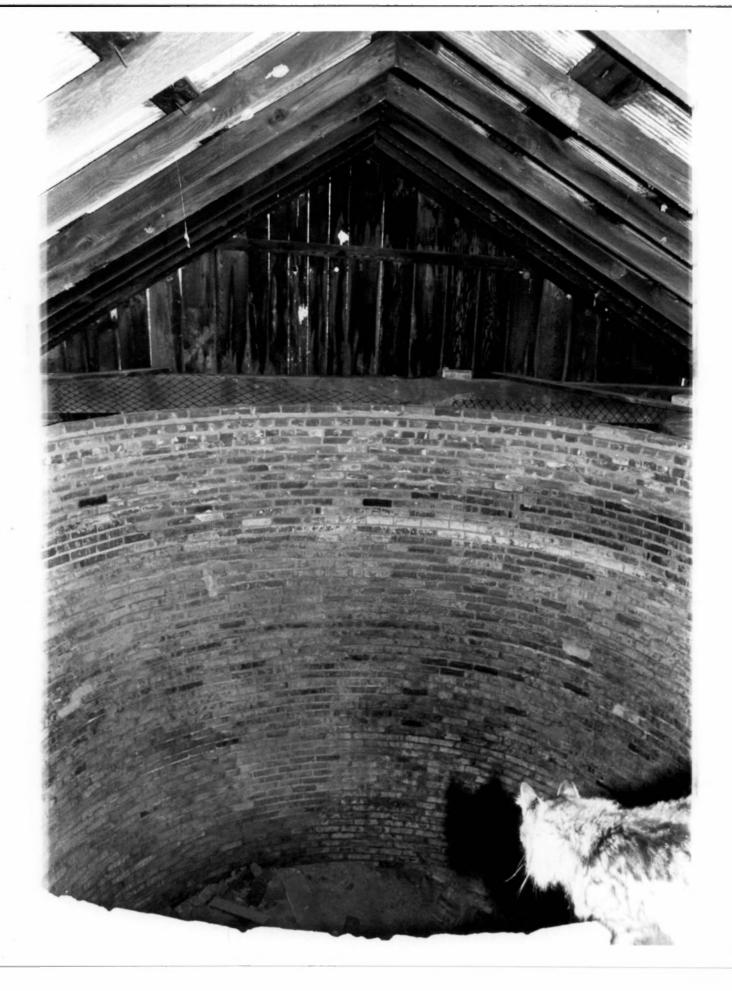


#14 of 26 OAKWOOD 1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: January 1981

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Jefferson City, MO 65101

Interior view of brick lined pit of icehouse; looking north.



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980

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Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, interior view of Victorian period hallway; looking east.



OAKWOOD #16 of 26
1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo
Photographer: James M. Denny
Date: December 1980
Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, interior view of entrance door; looking west.



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: January 1981
Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Oakwood, interior view of north parlor looking across hall from south parlor;



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: January 1981

Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, interior view of north parlor; looking north.



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1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny #19 of 26

Date: January 1981 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, interior view of south parlor; looking south.



#20 of 26

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, interior detail of mantel in south parlor; looking southwest.

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OAKWOOD #21 of 26
1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo
Photographer: James M. Denny
Date: December 1980
Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Oakwood, interior detail of mantel and
press in front room of ell on first
floor; locking northeast.



#22 of 26

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980

Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, interior detail of south bedroom of main block; looking southeast.



#23 of 26

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: December 1980 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, interior detail of north upstairs bedroom of main block; looking northwest.



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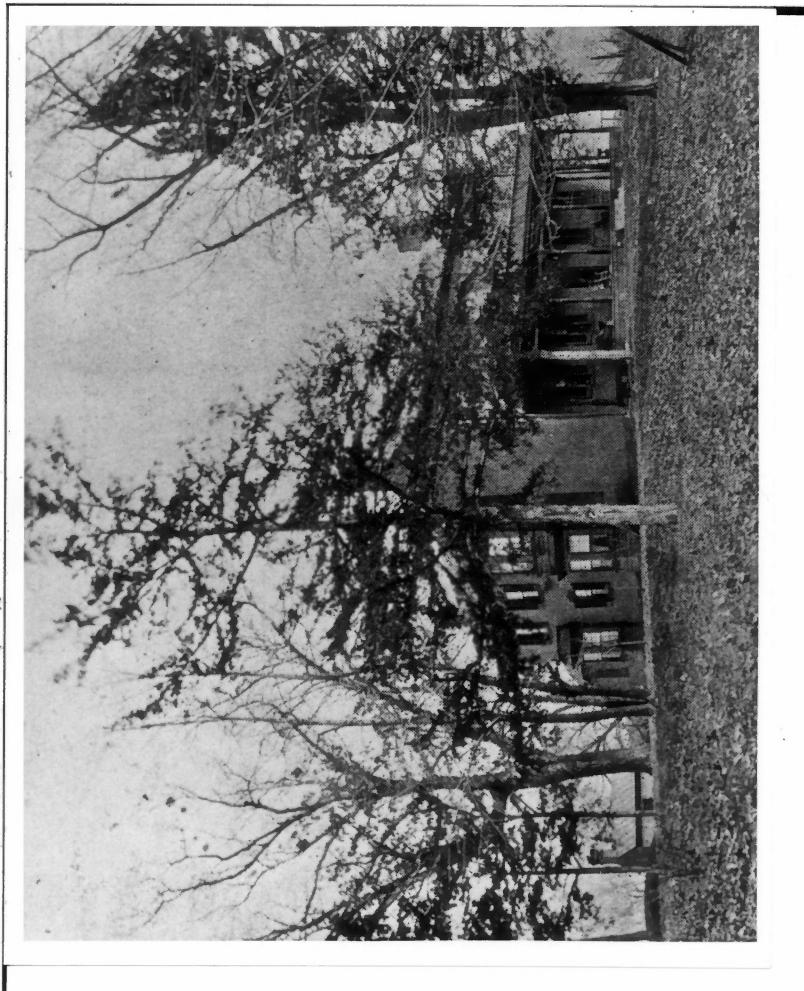
1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo Photographer: James M. Denny Date: April 1982 Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65101

Oakwood, interior view of second floor of enclosed ell; looking east.



OAKWOOD

1 Leonard Ave., Fayette, Howard Co., Mo
Photographer: James M. Denny Culture
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Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Historic view of Oakwood showing Victorian
verandah and bays; look ing southeast;
source: State Historical Society of Missouri,
Columbia, Missouri.



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#26 of 26

Photographer: James M. Denny workway

Date: Unknown
Neg. Loc.: Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, MO 65101.
Historic view of Oakwood showing Victorian
verandah and partially enclosed rear gallery;
looking northeast; source: Missouri
Historical Society, St. Louis, Missouri.

